

INCREASING THE RATE OF PENSION FOR CERTAIN
TOTALLY AND PERMANENTLY DISABLED VETERANS
OF WORLD WARS I AND II

MAY 5 (legislative day, APRIL 12), 1944.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. GEORGE (for Mr. CLARK of Missouri), from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 3377]

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 3377) to increase the rate of pension for World War veterans from \$40 to \$50 per month, to \$60 per month in certain specified cases, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

This bill provides for increasing the rate of pension payable to veterans of World War I and World War II for permanent total disability not shown to be due to service. The rate of pension provided under the bill will be \$50 monthly, except that where the veteran has been rated permanently and totally disabled and in receipt of pension for a continuous period of 10 years, or has reached the age of 65 years, the amount of pension will be \$60 monthly. The provisions and purposes of the bill are further explained in the following excerpt from the report which accompanied the bill in the House of Representatives.

The rate of pension payable under the existing law, which would be changed by this bill, is the rate of \$40 per month payable under Veterans Regulation No. 1 (a), part III, as amended, to World War veterans, for permanent total disability not shown to be due to service. This is the only pension payable to World War I veterans for non-service-connected disability.

Veterans of the Spanish-American War, including the Boxer Rebellion and Philippine Insurrection, receive service pension under the laws restored by Public, No. 269, Seventy-fourth Congress, August 13, 1935, at the rate of \$60 for total disability or age 65 years, with rates for lesser degrees of disability and for age 62, and \$100 per month if they are so disabled as to be in need of regular aid and attendance. There is no misconduct bar or income limitation applicable to such pensions.

The bill would not place the World War I veterans on a parity with the Spanish-American War veterans but would grant a pension for permanent and total disability at the rate of \$50 per month instead of the present \$40 rate. The amendment, approved by your committee, is believed to be equitable in that a continuous rating of permanent total disability for 10 years, or attainment of age 65 years if permanently and totally disabled, should warrant a rate of service pension on a parity with the rate paid to Spanish-American War veterans for total disability—i. e., \$60 per month.

The pension payable to World War veterans permanently and totally disabled under part III of Veterans Regulation No. 1 (a), as amended, is not payable where the disability resulted from misconduct and is not payable to any unmarried person whose annual income exceeds \$1,000 or to any married person or any person with minor children whose annual income exceeds \$2,500.

The rate of \$40 per month for permanent and total disability for World War I veterans for disability not shown to be due to service was originally established by law in the amendment to the World War Veterans' Act, 1924, approved July 3, 1930. The disability allowance law was repealed by the act of March 20, 1933, but the Presidential regulation under that act established a rate of \$20 for permanent and total disability in these cases, increased to \$30 June 6, 1933, and increased by act of Congress to the original \$40 per month by the act of June 10, 1942, Public, 601, Seventy-seventh Congress. The rate of \$40 per month in these cases to men unable to pursue substantially gainful employment, in many instances having disabilities which are probably due to service but where the veteran is unable to secure the necessary proofs required for service connection, is wholly inadequate to meet the needs of the veteran with or without dependents, and this is particularly true, bearing in mind the increased cost of living and the fact that the veteran is permanently and totally disabled from pursuing any substantially gainful occupation.

The amendment by your committee takes into consideration the inability of veterans, age 65 or over and rated permanently and totally disabled, to make any successful effort, even on part-time or temporary work, to supplement his income, and regardless of age if the veteran has been rated permanent and total and in receipt of pension for a continuous period of 10 years, there is no question but that his permanent and total inability to supplement his income is established.

